

Working for OUR community

Billy
Ciotto

Aid for Towns in the 9th Senate District

A very important part of my job representing the people of the 9th State Senate District is ensuring Cromwell, Middletown, Newington, Rocky Hill and Wethersfield receive their fair share of state funding. I am pleased to report the following grants and reimbursements from the state:

Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT)	\$9,947,952
Mashantucket & Mohegan Revenue Sharing	\$3,228,691
Town Aid Road Fund (TAR)	\$614,555
Local Capital Improvements (LoCIP)	\$923,352
Total Education Grants	\$36,963,254
Totals	\$51,677,805

*This funding
represents an
increase of
\$2,689,889 over
last year's total.*



Together with my colleague, Senator Mary Ann Handley, I successfully fought to restore service and reasonable fares to the Glastonbury/Rocky Hill ferry.

Benefits For Veterans...

The Rocky Hill Veterans Home provides assistance to 500 veterans, offering long-term health care, educational services, vocational testing, counseling, and rehabilitation services to its residents. Unfortunately, there are many others who would benefit from services provided at this facility, so this year we passed a bill to increase the number of veterans eligible for admission. We also increased the number of veterans eligible for burial in the state's Veterans Cemetery. For more information and eligibility criteria, please contact the Department of Veterans Affairs toll free at 1-800-550-0000 ext. 5893, or in the Hartford area at 860-721-5893.

...And Communities that Help Veterans

Newington cannot collect property taxes from the Federal Veterans Medical Center located in the town because it is a federally operated facility. This session, I secured additional state funding for the town of Newington by making the facility eligible for the state's PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) program. This provision provides a source of state funding for the town and further relieves the burden on local property taxpayers.

SUMMER 2004

Dear Friend:

Yet another legislative session is behind us and despite the ever-present specter of the possible impeachment of the governor, we were able to pass important legislation to keep Connecticut a great place to live and work.

Through hard work and dedication, we restored our citizens' faith in government, a faith that was so badly damaged by scandals we hear about almost daily. We also brought property tax relief to our over-burdened taxpayers by increasing the property tax credit on your state income tax; started the crucial task of repairing the safety net for the state's poorest of the poor; and made major strides in protecting our air and water through important environmental legislation.

The legislature recently opened a Special Session, to be convened should the House Select Committee of Inquiry decide articles of impeachment against the governor are necessary. Should the House decide to impeach the governor, the Senate would return for a trial, which would give us the most serious responsibility of deciding whether the governor should be removed from office.

I hope you find this newsletter informative. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

Biagio "Billy" Ciotto

Biagio "Billy" Ciotto
State Senator, 9th District



From your State Senator

Biagio "Billy" CIOTTO

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I'm proud
to represent the
9th Senatorial
district which
includes the
communities
of Cromwell,
Middletown,
Newington,
Rocky Hill and
Wethersfield

For my latest news, visit
www.senatedems.state.ct.us/Ciotto.html



State Senator
Biagio "Billy" Ciotto
CHIEF DEPUTY MAJORITY LEADER
CHAIRMAN: Transportation
MEMBER: General Law; Legislative Management;
Regulations Review

Representing Cromwell, Middletown, Newington, Rocky Hill & Wethersfield



The Press Room
Senator Ciotto's corner of our Press Room includes recent press releases and his Press Kit.

Legislation
A list of bills introduced by Senator Ciotto during the 2004 session can be found on the General Assembly Web site.

Newsletter
Senator Ciotto's winter 2003 district-wide constituent newsletter.
Ciotto-DW03.pdf (459k)
Helpful phone numbers (Middletown)
Ciotto-0401-Mtwn.pdf (296k)

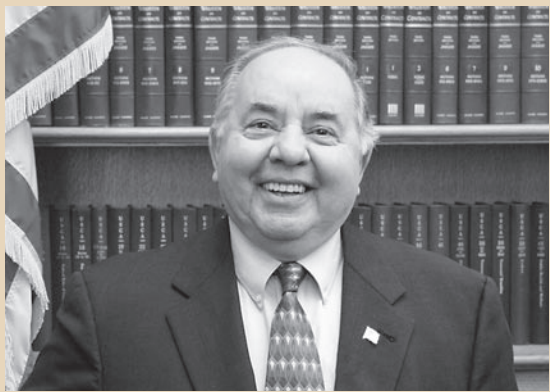
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ABOUT SENATOR CIOTTO
Elected to a fifth term to the Connecticut State Senate in 2002.

Look & Listen
VIDEO

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STATE SENATOR
Biagio “Billy” Ciotto



Continuing to Work
for Connecticut's Future



In April, my colleagues and I honored the members of both 2004 national champion UConn Husky teams and their coaches (including Geno Auriemma) at the State Capitol.

EXPANDING THE SCHOOL READINESS PROGRAM

This year we expanded and enhanced the state’s premier school readiness program by increasing the number of spaces available in the state’s neediest 40 school districts, requiring more college-level training by credentialed staff, and making the hours required for student participation more flexible to better serve the needs of working families. By increasing funding to this important program, we make a wise investment in the future of our children and the future of our state.

MAKING MEDICARE AND CONNPACE BETTER

New federal Medicare prescription drug coverage began on June 1. For the next eighteen months, this coverage will take the form of privately-offered discount cards that will provide a range of discounts on needed drugs, and will also provide \$600 of assistance to low-income elderly to help them pay for what is not covered. Here in Connecticut, for almost twenty years, we have proudly offered comprehensive prescription drug coverage for qualifying elderly and disabled through ConnPACE. This law coordinates ConnPACE with the new Medicare benefit, to help reduce confusion among those who will have both benefits.

Participants will be able to have just one card to present at their pharmacies; a computer system will determine whether Medicare or ConnPACE is responsible for paying, and what, if any, co-payment is owed by the participants. ConnPACE recipients will never have to pay more than their current co-payment, and may pay less. This much-needed law will ensure better integration of the programs and maintain patients’ access to prescription drugs, without causing undue confusion on the part of recipients. If you would like more information, please call ConnPACE at 1-800-423-5026, or Medicare at 1-800-633-4227.

HEALTH INSURANCE FOR ADOPTIVE PARENTS

Adoptive parents provide a stable home, which is so necessary to children’s self-esteem, as well as to their physical, emotional and social development. But an existing state law designed to help those who are foster parents has served as a barrier to those who wish to adopt the children in their care. Specifically, we have allowed foster parents of children under the care of the Department of Children and Families to purchase health insurance through the state at group rates-but we have not passed along this privilege to adoptive parents. A law we passed this session gives this opportunity to adoptive parents as well, hoping to encourage more people to make lifelong commitments to children in need of loving homes.

PROTECTING VICTIMS IN FAMILY VIOLENCE CASES

In 1986, Connecticut passed the Family Violence and Response Act to protect women from domestic violence. This comprehensive legislation required that law enforcement officers arrest anyone they suspected of committing an act of domestic violence. Unfortunately, as written, the law results in some unintentional arrests. Victims of family violence who use self-defense to protect themselves against their attackers are often arrested along with their attacker. Therefore, we passed legislation that does not require a law enforcement officer to arrest any party involved in a domestic dispute that is believed to have used force only as a means of self-defense. This legislation prevents victims of domestic violence from being victimized again.

CLEAN CARS

As the air quality in Connecticut has grown increasingly worse, asthma rates have continued to rise and the well being of our environment has been threatened. Although we have worked hard to alleviate this problem by reducing emissions from our state’s power plants, there is more that can be done. That’s why this session we passed a bill that would require light duty vehicles to meet stricter emission standards, beginning with the 2008 model year. This legislation will help to reduce air pollution and allow Connecticut’s residents to breathe easier.

INSPECTION OF AMUSEMENT RIDES

Amusement parks are a popular destination for many Connecticut families. In order to ensure the safety of our amusement park rides, we’ve passed legislation strengthening the credentialing of inspectors. Civil engineers who inspect amusement rides and devices will now be required to be certified to perform safety inspections by a nationally recognized professional or trade association of amusement ride safety officials. As technology allows us to create new rides with bigger thrills, it is of the utmost importance that qualified inspectors are available to ensure the safety of rides for patrons young and old!

RESTORING TRUST IN GOVERNMENT
AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS

For well over a year, Connecticut residents have heard revelation after revelation about unethical and unfortunate activities in the executive branch. In response, the Senate Democrats have been working to restore the trust in government compromised by a select few who acted as if they were above the law.



*By making our
already strong
ethics laws even
stronger, we
send a message
that Connecticut
will not tolerate
unethical behavior.*

As a result, this session we passed legislation that:

- Makes penalties for willful violation of our ethics code a felony punishable by up to five years in prison and a \$5,000 fine
- Extends the statute of limitations on ethics violations from 3 to 5 years and increases the maximum civil penalty from \$2,000 to \$10,000
- Strengthens the state’s ability to terminate contracts tainted by unethical behavior—helping the state recover the inflated costs of corruption
- Protects against conflicts of interest by requiring bidders on state contracts to disclose pertinent information about their financial interests and to sign affidavits noting any gifts they have given to agency officials and employees having a role in the contracting process
- Responds to the administration’s attempt to cut funding to the commissions that enforce ethics, elections, and freedom of information laws, by enacting legislation that would protect their budgets from such attacks year to year

By making our already strong ethics laws even stronger, we send a message that Connecticut will neither tolerate unethical behavior nor allow a few bad apples to spoil Connecticut’s long-standing reputation for good government.